Exploring the barriers faced by the Welsh food and drink industry to obtain food safety scheme compliance and technical accreditation

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Food Related Health Research

Nutrition and diet
- Food marketing and dental health
- Influencing dietary changes
- Nutritional education

Nutraceuticals
- Milk-derived bioactive peptides and lipids
- Plant-derived polyphenols
- Bioactive plant extracts and fibroblasts

Food safety
- Food safety culture in industry
- Consumers in domestic settings
- Patients, carers and professionals in healthcare settings
Food Safety Schemes and Technical Accreditation

• The framework for compliance within the industry to assist in the production of safe and legal food.
• Increased popularity of third party accreditation schemes in the UK
• Impact of a UK retail revolution

• Promote and support the uptake of recognised food safety schemes of food and drink businesses in Wales
The need for research

- Limited UK data detailing factors associated with obtaining compliance to food safety schemes
- Need to obtain an in-depth understanding of the barriers that exist to food and drink businesses in Wales to obtaining and maintaining food safety schemes and establish how to support food and drink businesses
Research approach

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<td>A desk-based review of food safety schemes ( n=30 )</td>
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<td>Self-complete online questionnaire with Welsh food and drink businesses and stakeholders ( n=34 )</td>
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Ethical approval was granted from Cardiff Met. (SREC reference: 7720).
Evaluation of available schemes

Figure 1. Food safety schemes
Figure 2. Percentage of FSSs included in the review based on target sector (n=30)
British Retail Consortium (BRC)

Figure 3 Total number of BRC certified sites in Wales ($n=172$) (November 2015)
Safe and Local Supplier Approval (SALSA)

Figure 4 Percentage of SALSA approved sites by UK regions (n=934)
Figure 5. Reported Food Safety Scheme Compliance/Technical Accreditation Status of Welsh FDMPBs (n=99).
FSSC/TA status of FDMPBs in Wales

Table 1. Reported business size and FSSC/TA of Welsh FDMPBS (n=96) (*according to EC definitions of business size6).

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Business size*</th>
<th>Employees</th>
<th>Turnover</th>
<th>FDMPBs</th>
<th>with FSSC/TA</th>
<th>with SALSA</th>
<th>with BRC</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Micro</td>
<td>&lt;10</td>
<td>&lt;£2 million</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>&lt;50</td>
<td>&lt;£10 million</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>&lt;250</td>
<td>&lt;£50 million</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>&gt;250</td>
<td>&gt;£50 million</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Micro sized FDMPBs were significantly associated with not having accreditation ($p<0.001$).
- SALSA was significantly associated with small/medium FDMPBs ($p<0.001$).
- BRC accreditation was significantly associated with large FDMPBs ($p<0.001$).
Drivers and benefits of accreditation

Drivers and Benefits

Drivers:
- Product Safety
- Customer requirement
- Culture

Benefits:
- Business growth
- Due diligence
- Brand protection
- Supply chain security

Obtaining and/or maintaining food safety scheme compliance / technical accreditation

Figure 6. Identification of drivers and benefits of FSSC/TA.
Drivers for compliance

“If you haven’t got it, you can’t trade.”
(Participant 45, director, FDMPB without FSSC/TA).

“Customer requirement. If they didn’t insist on it, would we do it all?”
(Participant 15, technical manager, FDMPB with FSSC/TA).

“The key legal one, is that this will generate an efficient due diligence defence scheme should they ever need to call up on it.”
(Participant 03, FSS Auditor/Mentor).
Benefits of compliance

“You’re maintaining those high level standards, so people keep their jobs, the factory doesn’t shut”
(Participant 39, Head of Technical, FDMPB without FSSC/TA).

“Food safety system will improve the profitability of the business.”
(Participant 03, FSS Auditor/Mentor).

“Obtaining certification against a food safety scheme does show that suppliers have met the basic requirements of a scheme, ..., rather than having to do audits that focus on what our brand would consider to be the ‘basic requirements to meet food safety’.”
(Participant 66, Retail representative).
Barriers to accreditation

Figure 7. Cloud indicating word frequency when discussing barriers to FSSC/TA.
Barriers: Time, cost and resources

“I can put it down to two things, time and money. Running the business takes up a lot of my time, the time that’s left goes towards my accreditation, I can’t afford to get a technical person.”

(Participant 43, owner, FDMPB without FSSC/TA).

“It’s the money and resource, for smaller companies the cost of having the audit, but for big companies it’s the people to input the standard.”

(Participant 66, Retail representative).
Barriers:
Knowledge and skills

“To get a BRC, I believe we would need a technical manager, so there is quite a lump of an overhead straight away that you have to do.”

(Participant 37, operations manager FDMPBs without a FSS).

“We’ve not got enough people coming through the right courses to take the jobs to enable them to actually put these schemes in place.”

(Participant 05, FSS auditor).

“The food industry has got a shortage of qualified technical staff.”

(Participant 02, FSS auditor/mentor).
Barriers:
Communication and access to information

“There’s so many different accreditations, that you don’t know them all.”
(Participant 64, owner, FDMPB without FSSC/TA).

“A barriers is knowing which standard is appropriate for your business.”
(Participant 29, owner, FDMPB with FSSC/TA).

“The fact that there are multiple standards out there, and always there’s one that isn’t recognised, different customers want different standards.”
(Participant 59, NGO stakeholder).
Support mechanisms believed to be most beneficial ($n=28$)
Conclusions

Support mechanisms to assist food and drink manufacturing and processing businesses in Wales to obtain and maintain food safety scheme compliance:

• Knowledge & skills development
  – Education
  – Training
  – Documentation support
  – Mentoring
  – Knowledge transfer
  – Networking
  – Pre-audits

• Improving information & communication
  – Online-information knowledge hub
  – Scheme owner communication
  – Consumer awareness of FSS

• Accessing financial support
  – Funding for capital expenditure
  – Signposting for training costs support
Acknowledgements

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